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Review of issues pertinent to the subsidiary structure of the Commission, including the work of the regional institutions: statistics

Report of the Governing Council of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific on its ninth session**

Summary

At its ninth session, the Governing Council of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP) commended the Institute for attaining the key results set out in its programme of work for the period 1 October 2012 to 30 September 2013. Through 17 courses/workshops, 440 government statisticians and officials of planning, health, agriculture and labour ministries of 44 countries and their respective institutions improved the quality of statistical outputs and increased their use for development planning, policy formulation and the monitoring of progress in development goals. The Council noted that by end of 2013, about 390 participants would be trained in 11 more courses. It also noted the high relevance of the focus on positioning statistics as a development imperative of the eleventh Management Seminar for Heads of National Statistical Offices in Asia and the Pacific, which was held in Chiba, Japan, on 21 and 22 November 2013 and its contribution to the global discussions on the development agenda beyond 2015.

Noting the expected increased demand for statistics in monitoring the development agenda beyond 2015, the Council advised SIAP to consider expanding its training activities to cover new topics related to, among other things, governance, big data and sustainable development.

The Council expressed appreciation for the successful deployment of more SIAP e-learning courses and the Institute's use of blended learning in some training courses. It recommended that SIAP accelerate further the delivery of online training and continue to work on creating a collaborative open online course platform for developing and delivering online statistical training with a range of partnerships.

The Governing Council endorsed the work and financial plan of SIAP for 2014. The plan includes the following: (a) design, coordination and delivery of at least 25 training courses on a range of areas at basic and advanced levels; (b) two management forums; (c) training development and coordination activities; and (d) formulation of the 2015-2019 strategic plan. The Council appreciated the role of SIAP as the Asia-Pacific training coordinator of the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics. It also stressed the critical role of the Network for the Coordination of Statistical Training in Asia and the Pacific in addressing training gaps.

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** The late submission of the present document is due to the need to incorporate views and comments from Governing Council members in finalizing the report.

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The Council acknowledged with deep appreciation the high level of support to SIAP by the host Government (Japan) through cash and in-kind contributions, despite the difficult financial climate, and expressed the crucial importance of maintaining such support. It stressed the key role of SIAP in meeting anticipated training needs centred on new statistical data and measurements for the development agenda beyond 2015, as well as in the production of basic statistics. It also urged member States to increase their cash contributions to SIAP and development partners to expand their technical cooperation activities in training in the region.

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I. Matters calling for action by the Commission or brought to its attention

A. Recommendations and decisions

1. Programme of work and training strategies

1. The Governing Council commends SIAP for its outstanding accomplishments and results in the reporting period and its progress in achieving its programme of work for 2013, especially in the light of the challenges posed by a decrease in the number of its core professional staff during the period, and expresses appreciation for its efforts in managing and administering its resources efficiently.

2. The Council stresses the importance of expanding the delivery of Internet-based e-learning by enlarging the scope of topics, increasing the number of course offerings and training more participants, and recommends that SIAP further strengthen its capacity to offer e-learning courses. It also recommends that the Institute pursue an initiative aimed at creating a collaborative open online course platform that engages partner training institutes, academia and statistics development partners in developing and delivering statistical training.

3. Noting the call for a data revolution and the expected increased demand for statistics in monitoring the development agenda beyond 2015, the Governing Council advises SIAP to further investigate the appropriateness and possibility of expanding its training activities to cover topics related to, among other things, big data and sustainable development.

4. The Governing Council recognizes the efforts made by SIAP in improving measurements of the impact of its training programmes, and recommends that the Institute further study and identify methods for better evaluation of the effectiveness of its e-learning courses.

5. In measuring the impact of statistical training, the Council notes the importance of involving organizations of training participants, and recommends that SIAP collaborate with these organizations in developing and instituting the evaluation framework for measuring the impact of its training programmes.

6. The Council recognizes the importance of tapping expertise in national statistical systems in making available knowledge and experiences to training participants, and recommends that SIAP step up its efforts in deploying a system for certifying trainers and institutions that provide statistical training. It also encourages expanding South-South cooperation for developing statistical capacity in the region.

7. The Council appreciates the importance of research-based training, especially in carrying out methodological research that can be applied by statistical offices. Noting that the research-based training programme of SIAP has been suspended due to cost-effectiveness concerns, the Council recommends that SIAP redesign its research-based training programme and consider modalities that would increase the quality of its outputs, such as better screening of applications for participation.

8. The Council recognizes the continued need to train staff of relatively developed statistical systems, and recommends that SIAP extend invitations

to its training courses to those member States in order to open up opportunities to participate in the courses on a self-funded basis.

2. Financial status and resource mobilization

9. To facilitate efforts to assess the financial status of the Institute, the Council recommends that SIAP provide a financial report that includes not just cash flows, but contains additional information, such as assets and liabilities.

10. Noting the need to increase the core staff of SIAP in the light of its decreased numbers over the past three years due to resource constraints and increased workload and to ensure that the Institute maintains the quality of its results, the Council recommends that SIAP explore sustainable options for doing so within the available institutional resources.

11. The Governing Council reiterates its recommendations for increasing contributions to SIAP and decides to issue a letter to member States prior to the seventieth session of the Commission conveying the decision at the eighth session to recommend a minimum annual cash contribution of $5,000 and a mandatory incremental increase of at least 5 per cent per annum.

12. As a modality to supplement SIAP resources in responding to the statistical training needs of the region, the Council recommends that SIAP expand its clientele base to include other government ministries and the private sector.

3. Work and financial plan for 2014

13. The Council recognizes that the result of the annual needs survey of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is crucial for member States to continue benefiting from the SIAP-JICA training courses. The Council urges national statistical offices (NSOs) to be actively engaged in setting national priorities for training based on the JICA survey. It further recommends that the ESCAP secretariat continue, on an annual basis, to provide SIAP with support by informing permanent representatives to ESCAP and other relevant national counterparts when the survey has been circulated to JICA national focal points.

14. To better assess the proposed work programmes in terms of meeting targets and evaluating resource gaps, the Council recommends the inclusion of the estimated number of participants in the programmes of training courses.

15. The Council expresses appreciation for the established cost-sharing arrangements between SIAP and the statistical training institutes of India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Malaysia and the Republic of Korea, and urges other member States to collaborate with SIAP through this modality.

16. The Council endorses the programme of work and financial plan proposed by SIAP for 2014.

4. Strategic planning for the period 2015-2019

17. The Council recognizes that it is essential to finalize the 2015-2019 strategic plan by the end of July 2014, and endorses the proposed guiding structure and timeline for completion of the plan contained in the report of the Report of the Friends of the Chair on its first meeting (E/ESCAP/SIAP/GC(9)/5).

18. The Council recommends that SIAP include a monitoring and evaluation plan as part of the results framework, which would serve as the basis for regular review and adjustments during implementation of the plan.

19. Given the broad experience and expertise required, the Council proposes that the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council and the SIAP Director review and modify, if needed, the current composition of members of the Friends of the Chair (FOC), and decides that the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council and the SIAP director will be responsible for deciding on the new composition of FOC.

5. Network for Coordination of Statistical Training in Asia and the Pacific

20. The Council expresses its support for the creation of the Network for Coordination of Statistical Training in Asia and the Pacific, in particular the designation of the Chair of the Governing Council as a member of the Network, the designation of SIAP as secretariat of the Network, and the initial focus of the activities of the Network.

21. The Council notes the importance of establishing a database of resource persons and regional technical cooperation initiatives pertaining to improving regional coordination, and expresses its support of the role of SIAP in establishing and maintaining the database.

6. Training component of the Asia-Pacific Regional Action Plan to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics

22. The Council notes with appreciation the effective collaboration among the implementing partners of the Asia-Pacific Regional Action Plan for the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics.

23. Given the existence of specific governance mechanisms for determining the work programme for the training component of the Regional Action Plan, the Council acknowledges that its main role is to provide advice to SIAP on the Institute's role as coordinator and in integrating the work programme of the Regional Action Plan into the programme of work of SIAP. In this regard, the Council suggests that the Regional Action Plan engage in capacity-building in the areas of fishery and forestry statistics. Furthermore, it recommends that SIAP include agriculture and rural statistics as a focus area in the 2015-2019 strategic plan.

24. Bearing in mind that a separate action plan covering countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) is under development, the Council notes the importance of ensuring that all member States of ESCAP benefit from training on agricultural and rural statistics provided by SIAP.

7. Date and venue of the tenth session of the Governing Council

25. The Council decides that an interim meeting will be held in July 2014 in Chiba, Japan and that the tenth session will be held back-to-back with the fourth session of the Committee on Statistics, which is scheduled to be held in Bangkok in December 2014.

B. Acknowledgements

26. The Governing Council acknowledges with deep appreciation the contributions and highest level of support to SIAP extended by the host Government (Japan) through cash and in-kind contributions made through its

Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications and JICA, despite the difficult financial climate.

27. The Council also expresses appreciation to the following:

(a) Contributing members and associate members of ESCAP for their cash contributions to SIAP for 2013;

(b) The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) for the multi-year collaborative partnership under the ESCAP/UNFPA project on "Statistical capacity-building for undertaking the 2010 round of population and housing census integrated with gender concerns";

(c) The National Academy for Statistical Administration of India, the Statistical Research and Training Centre of the Statistical Centre of Iran, the Statistical and Research Training Center of the Philippines, the Statistical Training Institute of the Department of Statistics of Malaysia, the Statistical Training Institute of Statistics Korea, the University of Tokushima and the University of the South Pacific for hosting regional and subregional courses on a cost-sharing basis;

(d) National experts who served as resource persons and guest lecturers for SIAP courses and their respective institutions: Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications and other ministries, prefectural governments, educational institutions and private companies in Japan; BPS-Statistics Indonesia; Department of Statistics, Malaysia; and National Statistical Coordination Board, Philippines;

(e) Regional and international statistics development partners that collaborated with SIAP in conducting its courses: Asian Development Bank (ADB); Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO); International Labour Organization (ILO); United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) (China); United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (Viet Nam); Institute for Statistics of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; UNFPA; Secretariat of the Pacific Community; United Nations Statistics Division; University of the South Pacific; and World Bank.

II. Summary of proceedings

A. Matters arising from the eighth session of the Governing Council and its interim session

28. The Governing Council had before it a note by the secretariat on matters arising from the eighth session and interim session of the Governing Council (E/ESCAP/SIAP/GC(9)/2). The Council noted with satisfaction the action taken and current status of the matters listed as reported by SIAP.

1. Financial status and resource mobilization

29. The Governing Council appreciated the increase in cash contributions by the Governments of Bangladesh and China in 2013. The representative of the host Government (Japan) informed the Council of its efforts to keep its contributions to SIAP at the same level as the previous year and urged members and associate members to continue their contributions to SIAP.

30. The representative of Malaysia expressed the country's intention to increase its cash contribution after 2014.

2. Programme of work and training strategies

31. The Director apprised the Council on initiatives taken by SIAP to expand delivery of Internet-based training in its training programmes. SIAP increased the number of online courses and introduced courses using a blended learning approach, such as a combination of online training and face-to-face training. The Council noted that blended learning increased the effectiveness of training as it ensured that participants had the requisite background needed for the face-to-face sessions. The representative of Japan informed the session of the country's efforts to obtain resources in the next fiscal year for improving the facilities and equipment for e-learning.

32. To develop a long-term strategy on the effective use of e-learning, SIAP organized the Fifth Workshop on Forging Partnerships in Statistical Training in Asia and the Pacific: Making e-Learning Work for Us in Chiba, Japan, from 24 to 26 June 2013. The Council agreed with the recommendation of the workshop that SIAP pursue an initiative to create a collaborative open online course platform that engages partner training institutes, academia and statistics development partners in developing and delivering statistical training.

33. On improving the evaluation of the impact of training, the Council noted that SIAP undertook a thorough study and research with support of a consultant that resulted in a framework for training evaluation. Concrete measures of the results would be developed further in 2014. The representative of Australia noted the need for better evaluation of online training and members suggested further research in that area.

34. Representatives of China, Malaysia and the Russian Federation reported efforts in strengthening collaboration with SIAP. China reiterated its strong interest in collaborating with SIAP during an official visit of the Director to the China International Statistical Training in August 2013. Malaysia expressed appreciation for the successful collaboration between SIAP and its new training institute in providing the first subregional course on the System of Environmental-Economic Accounts (SEEA) at the institute.

3. Work and financial plan for 2013

35. The Director emphasized the need for countries to prioritize statistics training courses in the JICA survey conducted in countries in order to ensure that SIAP continued to offer those foundational and basic statistical courses. The Council noted that several member States continued to experience difficulty in accessing the questionnaire, as well as timely information on the survey process. It expressed appreciation for the annual efforts of SIAP in providing information to NSOs on the survey and recommended that the ESCAP secretariat continue, on an annual basis, to support SIAP by informing permanent representatives to ESCAP and other relevant national counterparts of the survey schedule.

4. Strategic planning for the period 2015-2019

36. Acting on the request of the Director to review the composition of FOC, which was created in 2013 to assist SIAP in formulating the strategic plan, the Council suggested that the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council and the SIAP Director review and modify, if needed, the current composition of members of FOC.

5. Matters relating to the Committee on Statistics

37. The Council noted that retaining the current reporting line to the Commission whereby ESCAP regional institutions reported directly to it was endorsed by the Committee on Statistics at its third session and the Commission at its sixty-ninth session, pending the final report of an ongoing review.

B. Report of the Director of the Institute

38. The Governing Council had before it the report of the Director of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (E/ESCAP/SIAP/GC(9)/3). The Director of SIAP highlighted key results and accomplishments, summarized the financial and administrative status and drew attention to opportunities and challenges for SIAP in the near future.

1. Key results and accomplishments

39. The Governing Council at its eighth session endorsed the 2013 SIAP programme of work and financial plan. The programme was aimed at strengthening capacity to produce, disseminate and use economic, agricultural, population, social, vital and environmental statistics, increasing awareness and knowledge on options for modernizing statistical systems, and increasing training capability on national institutions. The programme of work consisted of implementation of training programmes and courses and training resources development and coordination.

40. During the period January 2013 to September 2013, the Institute conducted 17 training courses and workshops, which were attended by 440 government statisticians and ministry officials from 44 countries; 436 of them were from ESCAP member countries. A total of 68 per cent of the attendees participated in short courses and 12 per cent in e-learning courses. By the end of the year, 11 additional courses with a projected 388 participants would have been conducted.

41. About 68 per cent of the 436 participants from ESCAP member countries in the courses came from South-East Asia, 23 per cent from South and South-West Asia and 8 per cent the Pacific. Overall, there were more female participants (241) than males (199) — reversing the trend of more male than female participants for the first time since 2010. Gender ratios (expressed as the number of females per 100 males) remained low for participants from South and South-West Asia (55) and North and Central Asia (75). The ratio for short courses increased to 144, explaining the greater overall participation of women in training courses. The gender ratios for SIAP/JICA courses (60) and management-level workshops and seminars (40) remained low, while for e-learning courses, it was 100, as compared to previous years in which female participants far outnumbered male participants.

42. Based on indicators on performance set in the results framework of the 2010-2014 strategic plan, the Council commended SIAP for achieving the targeted results.

(a) Implementation of training programmes and courses

43. The SIAP training programmes and courses covered the following: fundamentals of official statistics; population and social statistics; national accounts and economic statistics; environment statistics; and agricultural

statistics. The courses ranged from basic to advanced and general to specialized levels, targeting the different core skills levels of the participants.

44. During the reporting period, SIAP conducted a four-month and a two-month residential course, 11 short courses (regional-5, subregional-2; country-4), three e-learning courses and one workshop.

Fundamentals of official statistics

45. The Director explained that the core training courses on fundamentals of official statistics were the long-running SIAP-JICA collaboration on the residential courses under the JICA group training programmes. The courses included the following: basic statistical methods and processes; statistical frameworks, standards and classifications; and basic population, social, and economic statistics. In recent years, those courses had focused on the production and analyses of data and statistics for monitoring achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. During the reporting period, 44 participants from 24 countries completed two such courses.

Population and social statistics

46. Since 2009, SIAP and the UNFPA Asia-Pacific Regional Office through the project "Statistical capacity-building for undertaking the 2010 round of population and housing census integrated with gender concerns" had conducted regional, subregional and country training workshops in order to increase the use of census data for development planning and policymaking. As of 30 September 2013, about 350 statisticians, planning officials and policymakers had received training. The Director informed the session that the project would end in 2013, with the final workshop to be held in December.

47. SIAP collaborated with the United Nations Statistics Division on a regional workshop that trained 21 officials from 14 countries in improving the integration of a gender perspective into official statistics based on the new Gender Statistics Manual.[1] The Manual furnished methodological and analytical information necessary to improve the availability, quality and use of gender statistics in countries with less developed statistical systems.

48. The Commission in its resolution 69/15 supported a regional strategic plan for improving civil registration and vital statistics. In line with that priority, SIAP initiated an annual series of regional workshops on production and use of vital statistics in 2012. The Director informed the session that a second workshop would be organized in December 2013.

National accounts and economic statistics

49. To assist countries in implementing the System of National Accounts, 2008 (2008 SNA), SIAP continued to offer a series of regional training courses at basic and advanced levels through both e-learning (3 by end 2013) and on-site modalities (2 by end 2013).

50. SIAP noted that despite the high demand for the e-learning courses on 2008 SNA, it had needed to limit the number of participants per course due to lecturer load. On average, 45 participants per e-learning course completed two courses during the reporting period. Although the courses were delivered

[1] United Nations Statistics Division, "Gender statistics manual: integrating a gender perspective into statistics".

in asynchronous mode, lecturers fielded questions and provided feedback on assignments to participants on a timely basis. The Council noted the importance of e-learning as a modality for increasing participation in the courses and encouraged SIAP to engage experts of national statistical systems in the delivery of the courses.

Environment statistics

51. In collaboration with the Statistics Division and the Environment and Development Division of ESCAP, SIAP continued to provide basic training on environment statistics to participants of the residential courses through a blended-learning approach. In response to a request of the Government of Malaysia for training on SEEA, the Institute and the Statistical Training Institute of Malaysia with support from the Statistics Division of ESCAP and the United Nations Statistics Division conducted the first subregional course on the topic. The Government of Malaysia expressed appreciation for the training and welcomed continued collaboration with SIAP in 2014.

Agricultural statistics

52. Under the training component of the Regional Action Plan, the implementing partners, ADB, FAO and SIAP, conducted two training-of-trainers regional workshops on building training resources for improving agricultural and rural statistics. Forty-nine statisticians from 15 countries completed the training. Another 15 statisticians were slated to participate in a third workshop in December 2013.

53. The Regional Action Plan supported the participation of four countries in a policy analysis workshop on food security, policy alleviation and sustainable agriculture given by the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture (CAPSA).

Modernizing national statistical systems

54. The fifth workshop in the series on statistical quality management and the fundamental principles of official statistics provided training to 17 senior managers from 11 countries on the generic national quality assurance framework (NQAF) template, which had been endorsed by the United Nations Statistical Commission at its forty-second session.[2] The sixth workshop which was scheduled to be held in October 2013, would train 22 senior managers from 11 countries on approaches for implementing NQAFs.

55. The theme of the eleventh Management Seminar for Heads of National Statistical Offices in Asia and the Pacific was "Positioning statistics as a development imperative: Opportunities in the context of formulating the post-2015 development agenda". To be held in Chiba, Japan, in November 2013, a planned feature of the seminar was a debate on whether statistics development should be a goal in its own right in the development agenda beyond 2015.

Customized training

56. During the reporting period, SIAP trained 140 statisticians in seven country courses based on requests from five countries (China, Myanmar,

[2] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2011, Supplement No. 4* (E/2011/24-E/CN.3/2011/37).

Philippines, Vanuatu and Viet Nam). The trainings were conducted on a cost-sharing basis with NSOs and through funding from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Myanmar), UNICEF (China) and UNDP (Viet Nam). Topics covered were gender statistics, analysis of social statistics, human resource development, small-area techniques, input-output tables, census tabulation and sampling.

(b) Training resources development and coordination

57. SIAP brought together 21 statistical training managers, university officials and training institutions for the fifth workshop on forging partnerships for the coordination of statistical training in the region to discuss possible mechanisms for offering collaborative open online courses based on the Massive Open Online Course model. The aim of the courses would be to strengthen coordination in developing and conducting e-learning courses in official statistics. Organizations, such as the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development, the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the Japanese Inter-university Network for Statistical Education and Statistics Indonesia, committed to developing and offering Internet-based e-learning through a common platform.

58. SIAP staff worked with a consultant to review and formulate an improved monitoring and evaluation strategy to strengthen, streamline and connect current evaluation mechanisms to ensure that all necessary data were collected at the relevant level and at the right time. The mechanisms were trainee feedback during and after training courses, external evaluations to assess specific result areas of SIAP, such as its relevance and niche, and needs assessment of client institutions to inform the work planning. The Director reported that SIAP would implement recommendations from the study, including the review of indicators used for measuring training results through feedback from trainees and their institutions and a modification of the training needs assessment tools. The Director reported that SIAP assumed responsibility as training coordinator for the Regional Action Plan and membership in its Regional Steering Committee.

59. During the reporting period, SIAP staff shared their expertise and experiences as resource persons, trainers, paper presenters and discussants at international and regional forums organized by development partners in the following areas: economic statistics and SNA; agricultural statistics; Millennium Development Goal indicators; gender statistics; sampling methods; national quality assurance frameworks; and design and delivery of statistical training courses.

(c) Implementation strategies

60. The Director reported on the resource gaps — both human and financial — encountered in implementing the programme of work for 2013, and highlighted the strategies SIAP took to address them.

61. SIAP used the results of a rapid appraisal to identify the main training needs of member States in order to prioritize the courses that were to be offered in 2013 and in selecting countries to be funded for the courses.

62. SIAP collaborated with the following statistical offices and training institutes through co-financing arrangements: Central Statistical Organisation, India; General Statistics Office, Viet Nam (one country course); National Academy of Statistical Administration; National Statistics Office, Philippines; Statistical Research and Training Center, Philippines; Statistical and Research

and Training Centre, Statistical Centre of Iran; Statistical Training Institute, Department of Statistics Malaysia; and Statistics Korea. In addition, all of the SIAP training courses benefited from expert resources provided by partners.

63. Partnerships were also strengthened by conducting training courses jointly. Courses conducted in Chiba, Japan, were organized in collaboration with the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications of Japan. The United Nations Statistics Division and SIAP jointly organized two workshops and SIAP collaborated with CAPSA on one workshop.

64. The Institute strengthened staff capacity to develop a learning management system based on a modular object-oriented dynamic learning environment, known as Moodle. SIAP used the learning management system to run blended-learning regional courses on the use of population census data to enhance the effectiveness of the training and conducted an online preparatory course for a four-month SIAP-JICA residential course organized in collaboration with Tokushima University.

65. SIAP supported demand-driven country courses by encouraging organizations to define their training objectives and outline the expected contents of the course and to co-finance the implementation of the courses, including through technical cooperation projects. Six such courses were conducted for five countries, namely China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Myanmar, Vanuatu and Viet Nam.

(d) Summary of discussion on key results and accomplishments and implementation strategies

66. Several members and associate members and regional and international organizations commended SIAP for its outstanding accomplishments and results in the reporting period and its progress in achieving the programme of work for 2013. They also expressed appreciation for the Institute's success in capacity-building in the region through its training programmes. The representative of Mongolia requested to place on record its appreciation for the Director's focused and committed leadership of SIAP, the tangible contributions of SIAP in developing the country's official statistics and the need for SIAP to continue to extend training in Japan due to its rich experience in reforming its statistical system. It urged countries to highlight at the forthcoming sessions of the Commission and the Committee on Statistics the importance of SIAP in strengthening statistical capability in their respective countries. The representative of Timor-Leste emphasized the important role of SIAP training in increasing the country's statistical capability.

67. Representatives of Malaysia, Samoa, the Statistical Centre of Iran, FAO and the United Nations Statistics Division expressed their commitment to continue to collaborate with SIAP in the delivery of training courses.

68. The representative of Australia encouraged the stretching of targets for some results, such as development of e-learning materials and a targeted number of participants. He noted that it would be more difficult to measure the performance of SIAP as it had increased its focus on building the capacity of other organizations to deliver training in addition to delivering training itself. The Council recognized the need for inputs from institutions that send participants to training courses in order to better measure the impact of training. Members encouraged SIAP to develop a system for collecting those inputs as part of its evaluation strategy.

69. The Council appreciated that SIAP achieved those targets with a small number of core professional staff through collaboration with other training institutions and efficient management of its resources. It urged further collaboration in offering training courses, implementing suitable mechanisms for certification of experts for both face-to-face and online training and setting up a database of available trainers.

70. The Council stressed that expanding the delivery of Internet-based e-learning would enable the expansion of the scope of topics and an increase in the number of course offerings, and result in training of more participants.

2. Management and administration

(a) Human resources

71. The Director reported that, as of 30 September 2013, the Institute was operating with four professional staff and three support staff. Two professional staff posts and one support staff position remained frozen as part of cost-cutting measures instituted in 2011. With support from ESCAP, SIAP staff received training on communication and writing skills, performance management, leadership development, team building, International Public Sector Accounting Standards and Moodle.

72. The Governing Council noted that SIAP had engaged the expert services of 41 resource persons from various agencies and five consultants for 13 training courses to expand its human resource base. Also, 10 officials and staff of the cooperating agency of the host Government, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, extended support services that entailed the following: coordination with government ministries for securing resource persons; arranging field visits and official ceremonies for the SIAP courses conducted in Chiba, Japan; and maintenance of training facilities and equipment at the Institute offices. In addition, the Statistics Division and subregional offices of ESCAP along with UNDP country offices provided administrative and logistical backstopping services to SIAP.

(b) Financial resources

73. The Director summarized the financial status of SIAP as of 30 September 2013, explaining that SIAP had a fund balance of $4,030,414 — calculated from total income (voluntary cash contributions of member States to SIAP plus contributions from technical cooperation projects plus interest) of $2,919,056, less expenditure of $1,367,990 plus the fund balance as of 1 January 2013 of $2,479,348.

74. Total cash contributions received from ESCAP member States in 2013, as of 30 September, amounted to $1,946,700. The Director further noted that the contribution of $1,640,700 from the host Government continued to constitute the bulk of the annual cash contributions. Cash contributions from other member and associate members of ESCAP as of 30 September totalled $306,887.

75. Income from two technical cooperation projects were $215,299 from UNFPA to undertake activities under the ESCAP/UNFPA project on "Statistical capacity-building for undertaking the 2010 round of population and housing census integrated with gender concerns" and $746,426 from FAO to undertake activities under the Regional Action Plan.

76. The Director noted that in-kind contributions, namely training facilities and supplies, costs of travel, accommodation and living expenses of participants and resource persons, and costs of staff time, accounted for a large share of programme costs. During the reporting period, the host Government, ten NSOs of ESCAP member States, eight regional and international agencies, including ESCAP divisions and subregional offices and United Nations agencies, and four universities and organizations contributed in-kind to the delivery of the work programme of SIAP. Available estimates of in-kind contributions from Australia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines, and the Republic of Korea totalled $1,732,386, with Japan accounting for the bulk of it.

(c) Summary of discussions on management and administration

77. The representative of Mongolia emphasized that the strong support extended by the host Government enabled the Institute to fulfil its critical role of building the capability of statistical systems in the region and requested it to continue the high level of support.

78. The representative of the Republic of Korea expressed the country's intention to increase its contribution to SIAP by 40 per cent.

79. The representative of Japan suggested that future financial reports include not just cash flows but also information, such as assets and liabilities, that would facilitate assessments of the financial status of the Institute.

4. Opportunities and challenges

80. The Director highlighted the opportunities for growth and change and the challenges presented by the programme of work. Those included the following: delivering a large number of courses and maintaining high quality results despite the Institute's small number of core staff; reliance on the expert community and the challenge of certification related to training skills; accelerating online training to match the pace of increasing participants and purposes, such as statistical literacy; improving training evaluation conducted by SIAP; and taking advantage of the opportunity to improve training evaluation in national statistical systems.

81. The Director noted the increasing importance of coordination of training activities in the region and the proactive coordinating roles taken by SIAP, such as serving as secretariat for the Network for the Coordination of Statistical Training in Asia and the Pacific. Those roles would impose additional demands on SIAP core staff, but they would also provide resources and opportunities for hiring additional staff, realizing a system of expert affiliates and strengthening partnerships.

C. Consideration of matters relating to the programme of work of the Institute

1. Work and financial plan for 2014

82. The Governing Council had before it the document entitled "Work and financial plan of the Institute for 2014" (E/ESCAP/SIAP/GC(9)/4). The Director highlighted the activities under the two main components of the work plan, (a) training programmes and courses for official statistics and (b) training resources development and coordination, and the financial plan. The Council endorsed the proposed work and financial plan and recommended that SIAP act on the suggestions made in the discussions.

(a) Training programmes and courses for official statistics

83. SIAP planned to implement about 25 training courses and workshops across seven programme areas: fundamentals of official statistics (2nd SIAP/JICA course on production of Millennium Development Goal indicators and 1st SIAP/JICA course on production and statistical analysis of indicators in support of inclusive development policies); population and social statistics (regional courses on gender statistics, vital statistics workshop series and analysis of census data); national accounts and economic statistics (basic, intermediate and advanced level regional courses series on 2008 SNA; regional course on business registers); agricultural statistics (training courses and workshops under the Regional Action Plan); environment statistics (regional course series); modernizing national statistical systems (12th Management Seminar for Heads of National Statistical Offices, 7th Workshop on Statistical Quality Management and Fundamentals of Official Statistics); and customized on-demand training (country courses, with a focus on Timor-Leste and Myanmar, collaboration with University of the South Pacific on its academic programme on official statistics).

84. The Council noted with satisfaction the increased number of e-learning courses and the blended-learning training designs. It stressed the importance of research-based training and noted its absence from the SIAP programme of work over the last two years. The Director explained that SIAP would redesign the programme with the aim of increasing cost-efficiency and producing publishable research papers.

85. The representative of FAO expressed appreciation for the strong collaboration with SIAP in improving statistical capacity and producing publications on agricultural statistics methods. He noted that the Regional Action Plan presented opportunities for continuing such collaboration, especially in training. The Council noted that the Regional Action Plan had led to the creation of governance mechanisms for reviewing and endorsing training component activities.

86. The representative of Hong Kong, China noted that developed statistical systems might wish to avail themselves of SIAP training on a self-funded basis and suggested that it routinely extend invitations to them.

(b) Training resources development and coordination

87. The Director highlighted three main areas of work under the training resources development and coordination component: developing e-learning courses through collaborative open online courses; enhancing the multiplier effect and assuring quality through a certification system of experts for statistical training and further developing skills frameworks and training needs assessment tools; and improving regional coordination, including holding the sixth workshop on forging partnerships in statistical training, creating a database on statistical training and organizing the Network for the Coordination of Statistical Training in Asia and the Pacific.

(c) Financial plan

88. In presenting the financial plan for the proposed programme of work, the Director drew the attention of the Council to the funding gaps for training courses for which there were as yet no identified funding sources. The Director explained that the main funding gaps involved primarily travel costs and daily subsistence allowance for participants. The Council appreciated the importance of cost-sharing arrangements between SIAP and training

institutes to the financial planning of SIAP. The representative of Australia suggested that SIAP include information on the target number of participants in the plan.

2. Programme of work to formulate the 2015-2019 strategic plan: Report of the Friends of the Chair on its first meeting

89. The Governing Council had before it the report of the Friends of the Chair on its first meeting (E/ESCAP/SIAP/GC(9)/5). In the report, a review of the goals, objectives and outputs of the current plan were summarized and statistical and training developments that might affect the future plan were considered. The Director presented the proposed structure of the 2015-2019 plan and the programme of work, including the consultative process for formulating it.

90. The representative of Australia expressed satisfaction with the initial proposals of FOC and encouraged the body to engage leading experts from academia and international organizations in its discussions. The representative of the Philippines emphasized the importance of addressing the statistical requirements of the development agenda beyond 2015, as well as the inclusion of a monitoring and evaluation plan for regular review and adjustments during implementation of the plan.

91. The Governing Council concurred with the above-mentioned recommendations, and endorsed the proposed guiding structure and timeline for completion of the plan. It also noted that it was essential to finalize the plan by the end of July 2014.

D. Consideration of matters relating to the Committee on Statistics

1. Regional coordination of statistical training

92. The Governing Council had before it the report on the Advisory Group on Regional Coordination of Statistical Training (E/ESCAP/SIAP/GC(9)/6). It expressed support for the creation of the Network for the Coordination of Statistical Training in Asia and the Pacific by the Committee on Statistics, in particular the designation of the Chair of the Governing Council as a member of the Network, the designation of SIAP as secretariat of the Network and the initial focus activities of the Network.

93. Recognizing the importance of establishing a database of resource persons and regional technical cooperation initiatives in improving regional coordination, the Council expressed support for the role of SIAP in its establishment and maintenance.

2. Regional Action Plan for the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics

94. The Governing Council had before it the report on the Regional Action Plan for the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics: Training component (E/ESCAP/SIAP/GC(9)/7).

95. The Council expressed appreciation for the effective collaboration among the implementing partners of the Regional Action Plan. The representative of Samoa emphasized the need for strong coordination between a country's ministry of agriculture and its NSO. The representative of ESCAP noted that collaboration among the implementing partners and the Regional Action Plan could be expanded to other areas of statistical

development for fundraising for SIAP activities. The Council agreed with the suggestion of the representative of FAO that including agricultural and rural statistics as a focus area in the 2015-2019 strategic plan would be a way of raising funds for the Regional Action Plan.

96. The representative of the Republic of Korea pointed to the diversity in country situations of agricultural and rural statistics and suggested that country practices be systematically disseminated.

97. The representative of the Russian Federation pointed out that the Regional Action Plan did not cover the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States. The representative of FAO clarified that a separate action plan covering those countries was under development.

E. Other matters

98. On behalf of Pacific island countries and territories, the representative of Samoa requested that they be granted automatic membership to the SIAP Governing Council. The Council expressed sympathy for the proposal but noted that there was no strong support to move it forward at that time.

99. The representative of Malaysia informed the Council of the country's new training institute and of its intention to collaborate with SIAP and other training institutes in the region. The representative of the Philippines informed the Council that, following the implementation of the country's new statistics law, its statistical research and training centre would be strengthened.

F. Adoption of the report of the Governing Council

100. On 19 November 2013, the Governing Council endorsed the matters calling for action or to be brought to the attention of the Commission (see chap. I). It agreed that, as Secretary of the Council, the Director of SIAP would prepare the complete report of the Governing Council on its ninth session for the seventieth session of the Commission.

III. Organization of the session

A. Opening of the session

101. The ninth session of the Governing Council of SIAP was held in Chiba, Japan, on 19 and 20 November 2013.

102. The representative of the Chair of the eighth session of the Governing Council, Mr. Jonathan Palmer (Australia), officially opened the ninth session.

103. An opening statement was delivered by the Director of SIAP on behalf of the Executive Secretary.

B. Attendance

104. The session was attended by representatives of the host Government (Japan) and six of the eight elected members of the Governing Council: Australia; China; Indonesia; Philippines; Republic of Korea; and Russian Federation. India and Thailand did not send representatives to the session.

105. Representatives of the following members and associate members attended the session as observers: Cambodia; Islamic Republic of Iran;

Lao People's Democratic Republic; Malaysia; Mongolia; Myanmar; Samoa; Sri Lanka; Timor-Leste; Viet Nam; and Hong Kong, China.

106. Representatives of the following organizations attended the session as observers: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific; World Health Organization Regional Office for South-East Asia; United Nations Statistics Division; and Asian Development Bank.

C. Election of officers

107. The Governing Council elected the following officers by acclamation:

Chair:	Mr. Suryamin (Indonesia)
Vice-Chair:	Mr. Takao Itou (Japan)

D. Adoption of the agenda

108. The Governing Council adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the session:
   - (a) Opening statements;
   - (b) Election of officers;
   - (c) Adoption of the agenda.
2. Matters arising from the eighth session of the Governing Council and its interim session.
3. Report of the Director of the Institute.
4. Consideration of matters relating to the programme of work of the Institute:
   - (a) Work and financial plan for 2014;
   - (b) Programme of work to formulate the 2015-2019 strategic plan: Report of the Friends of the Chair on its first meeting.
5. Consideration of matters relating to the Committee on Statistics:
   - (a) Report on the Advisory Group on Regional Coordination of Statistical Training;
   - (b) Report on the Regional Action Plan for the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics: Training component.
6. Other matters.
7. Date and venue of the tenth session of the Governing Council.
8. Adoption of the report of the Governing Council.

B14-00318

Annex I

List of documents

Document symbol	Title	Agenda item
E/ESCAP/SIAP/GC(9)/1/Rev.1	Annotated provisional agenda	1c
E/ESCAP/SIAP/GC(9)/2	Matters arising from the eighth session of the Governing Council and its interim session	2
E/ESCAP/SIAP/GC(9)/3	Report of the Director of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific to the Governing Council at its ninth session	3
E/ESCAP/SIAP/GC(9)/4	Work and financial plan of the Institute for 2014	4a
E/ESCAP/SIAP/GC(9)/5	Report of the Friends of the Chair on its first meeting	4b
E/ESCAP/SIAP/GC(9)/6	Report on the Advisory Group on Regional Coordination of Statistical Training	5a
E/ESCAP/SIAP/GC(9)/7	Report on the Regional Action Plan for the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics: Training component	5b
E/ESCAP/SIAP/GC(9)/INF/1	Information for participants	
E/ESCAP/SIAP/GC(8)/INF/2/Rev.2	Provisional list of participants	1b
E/ESCAP/SIAP/GC(8)/INF/3	Provisional schedule of the meeting	1a

Annex II

Financial statement of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific for the year ended 31 December 2013
(United States dollars)

	2013	2012
Income		
Contributions	2 896 617	2 534 007
Interest income	21 506	18 842
Total income	2 918 123	2 552 849
Less: Expenditure	1 992 110	2 562 089
Net income over expenditure	926 013	(9 240)
Fund balance as at 1 January 2013	2 479 348	2 488 588
Less: Refunds to donors	-	-
Fund balance as at 31 December 2013	**3 405 361**	**2 479 348**

Annex III

Financial statement of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific for the year ended 31 December 2013 by project component
(United States dollars)

	Joint contributions capacity development project - Institutional support	Asia Pacific Regional Action Plan for the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics (FAO)	UNFPA	Total
Income				
Contributions	2 037 762[a]	746 426	112 429	2 896 617
Interest income	19 104	2 402	-	21 506
Total income	2 056 866	748 828	112 429	2 918 123
Less: Expenditure	1 740 321	139 360	112 429	1 992 110
Net income over expenditure	316 545	609 468	-	926 013
Fund Balance as at 1 January 2013	2 479 348	-	-	2 479 348
Less: Refunds to donors	-	-	-	-
Fund Balance as at 31 December 2013	**2 795 893**	**609 468**	**-**	**3 405 361**

[a] Please refer to annex IV for details of the contributions.

Annex IV

Cash contributions to the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific for institutional support received during the year 2013
(United States dollars)

Country/Area	Year ended 31 December 2013	Year ended 31 December 2012
Australia	-	315 250[a]
Azerbaijan	-	-
Bangladesh	5 000	3 050
Bhutan	-	-
Brunei Darussalam	45 000[e]	
Cambodia	-	1 000
China	60 000	50 000
Fiji	-	16 077[b]
Hong Kong, China	30 000	30 000
India	25 000	25 000
Indonesia	30 000	30 000
Japan	1 640 700	1 652 000
Kazakhstan	5 000	5 000
Macao, China	20,000	20,000
Malaysia	20 000	20 000
Maldives	-	2 000
Mongolia	10 000	10 000
Myanmar	1 000[f]	-
Pakistan	14 862[g]	14 934[c]
Papua New Guinea	-	4 981
Philippines	-	17 500
Republic of Korea	50 000	45 153
Russian Federation	-	15 000[d]
Samoa	-	3 000
Singapore	15 000	15 000
Sri Lanka	10 000	10 000
Thailand	30 000	30 000
Timor-Leste	-	5 000
Tonga	-	1 500
Turkey	15 000	15 000
Tuvalu	1 200	-
Vanuatu	-	5 000
Vietnam	10 000	10 000
TOTAL	**2 037 762**	**2 371 445**

[a] This represented annual contributions for 2012, 2013 and 2014.

[b] This represented annual contributions for 2012 ($5,000) and 2013 ($11,077).

[c] This represented the annual contribution for 2011.

[d] This contribution was transferred from the balance of closed project 2109-RUS10007 as per a letter from the Embassy of the Russian Federation in Thailand.

[e] This represented annual contributions for 2011, 2012 and 2013.

[f] This represented the annual contribution for 2010.

[g] This represented the annual contribution for 2012.